



MEMORANDUM

Date: July 8, 2016

To: Board of Park Commissioners

From: Max Jacobs, Property & Acquisition Services Manager
Michael Shiosaki, Director, Planning & Development Division

Subject: Encroachment Resolution Program - Overview

Requested Board Action

This briefing is informational only, to provide an update and overview of the Encroachment Resolution Program; no action is requested.

Project or Policy Description and Background

Seattle has one of the finest parks systems in the United States. Our parks come in a wide range of types, including undeveloped forest land, open space and natural areas, beaches, maintained gardens, historic boulevards, multi-purpose trails, sports fields, playgrounds, neighborhood parks and urban plazas/squares. The Seattle community passionately supports and cares about its parks, which, as stewards of public lands, Seattle Parks and Recreation is responsible for preserving and protecting. Among other things, SPR fulfills this role by eliminating and preventing unauthorized, non-park uses of park land. The public's strong support for this work was expressed most recently in the 2014 Seattle Park District property management mandate (from Investment Initiative 1) to "aggressively eliminate encroachments." From this grows the Encroachment Resolution Program being described here.

This stewardship concern over encroachments onto park land follows previous policy, including Resolution 29475 in 1996, which amended SMC 18.30 to strengthen enforcement. The policy was reinforced by the 2008 Strategic Action Plan. This effort received a big boost when Seattle voters supported the Seattle Park District, which created additional dedicated funding for this Encroachment Resolution Program.

In previous years, the core real estate-related focus of Seattle Parks and Recreation had been on acquisition of new land for development of new Parks facilities and expansion of open space. In that context, removing encroachments was mostly handled in an individualized manner, in response to individual reports. By contrast, the Seattle Park District funds dedicated staff for the purpose of implementing procedures that will allow us to remove encroachments through a holistic approach. To that end, Seattle Parks and Recreation is developing a set of procedures that are policy-based and will be implemented in a systematic, consistent and equitable manner. In addition to facilitating removal of encroachments, these procedures will establish a comprehensive framework for restoration. We will also be developing mechanisms to educate

the public on being a good park neighbor to ensure that potential buyers and sellers of property, abutting parks, understand the significance of encroachments and work with SPR on a plan to resolve any existing encroachments.

Public Involvement Process

The community's mandate to resolve encroachments, as expressed in the Seattle Park District priorities, resulted from extensive public involvement and a City-wide vote.

Environmental Sustainability

The Parks & Recreation Department's Encroachment Resolution Program, which is geared toward protecting park land for Parks uses now and into the distant future, is one part of a global effort toward supporting environmental sustainability.

Additional Information

Staff contacts:

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